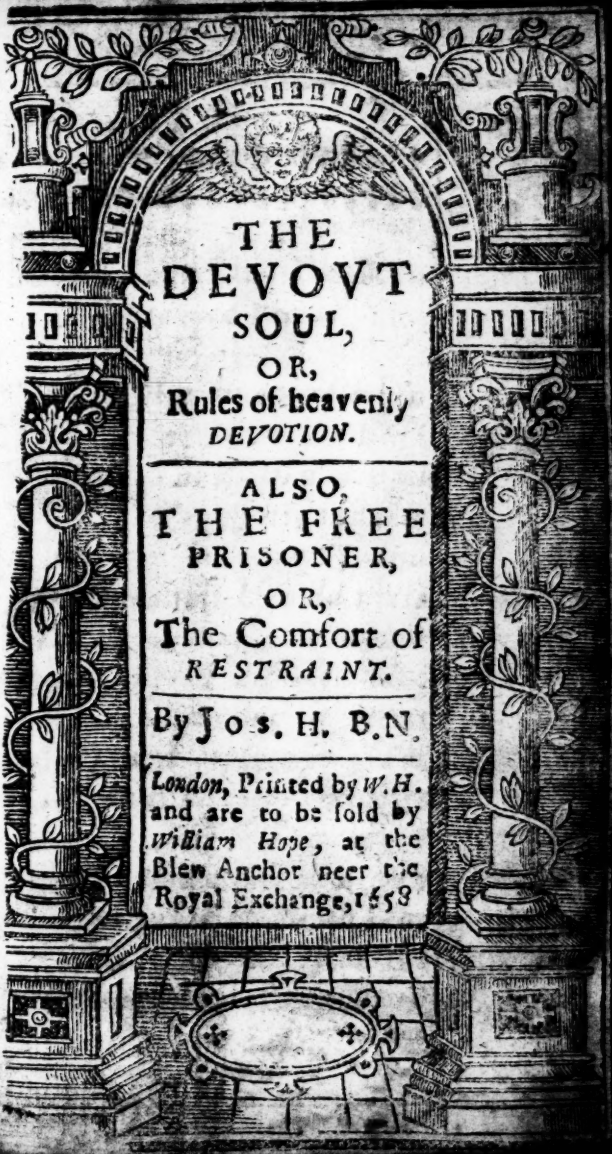

THE DEVOUT SOUL,

OR,

Rules of heavenly *DEVOTION.*

ALSO,

THE FREE PRISONER,

OR,

The Comfort of *RESTRAINT.*

By Jos. H. B.N.

London, Printed by *W. H.* and are to be sold by *William Hope*, at the Blew Anchor neer the Royal Exchange, 1658

To all Christian Readers,
Grace and Peace.

That in a time when we heare no noise but of Drums and Trumpets, and talk of nothing but arms, and sieges, & battels, I should write of Devotion, may seem to some of you strange & unseasonable; to me, contrarily, it seems most fit and opportune; For when can it be more proper to direct our addresse to the throne of grace, then when we are in the very jawes of Death? or when should we goe to seek the face of our God, rather, then in the needfull time of trouble?

Bleſſed be my God, who in the midſt of theſe wofull tumults, hath vouchſafed to give me theſe calm & holy thoughts; which I juſtly ſuppoſe, he meant not to ſuggeſt, that they ſhould be ſmothered in the breaſt wherein they were conceived, but with a purpoſe to have the benefit communicated unto many. Who is there that needs not vehement excitations, and helps to devotion? and when more then now? In a tempeſt the Mariners themſelves doe not only cry every man to his God, but awaken Jonah, *that is faſt aſleep under the hatches, and chide him to his praiers. Surely, had we not been failing in our devotions, we could not have been thus univerſally miſerable; That duty, the neglect whereof is guilty of our ſalamity,*

mity, must in the effect all performance of it, be the means of our recovery. Be but devout, and we cannot miscarry under judgements; woe is me, the tears of penitence, were more fit to quench the publique flame, than blood. How soon would it clear up above head, if we were but holily affected within? Could we send our zealous Ambassadours up to heaven, we could not fail of an happy peace. I direct the way; God bring us to the end: For my own particular practice; God is witnesse to my soul, that (as one, the sense of whose private affliction is swallowed up of the publique) I cease not daily to ply the Father of mercies with my fervent praiers, that he would, at last, be pleased, after so many streams of blood, to

passe an Act of Pacification in heaven: And what good heart can do otherwise? Brethren, all ye that love God, and his Church, and his Truth, and his Anointed, and your Countrey, & your selves, and yours, join your forces with mine, and let us by an holy violence make way to the gates of Heaven with our petition, for mercy and peace; and not suffer our selves to be beaten off from the threshold of Grace, till we be answered with a condescent. He, whose goodnesse is wont to prevent our desires, will not give denyals to our importunities.

Pray, and farewell.

Norwich.
Mar. 10.
1642.

THE DEVOUT SOVLE.

Sect. 1.

DEvotion is the life of Religion, the very ſoule of Piety, the higheſt imploimēt of grace; and no other then the prepoſſeſſion of heaven by the Saints of God here upon earth; every improvement whereof is of more advantage and value to the Chriſtian ſoul, than all the profit & contentments which this

world can affoord it.

There is a kind of Art of Devotion (if we can attain unto it) whereby the practice thereof may be much advanced: We have known indeed some holy ſoules, which out of the generall precepts of piety, and their own happy experiments of Gods mercy, have through the grace of God, grown to a great meaſure of perfection this way; which yet might have been much expedited, and compleated, by thoſe helps, which the greater illumination and experience of others might have afforded them: Like as we ſee it in other faculties; there are thoſe, who out of a naturall dexterity, and their own frequent practice, have got

got into a safe posture of defence, and have handled their weapon with commendable skill, whom yet the Fence-schoole might have raised to an higher pitch of cunning: As nature is perfitted, so grace is not a little furthered by Art; since it pleaseth the wisdome of God, to work ordinarily upon the soul, not by the immediate power of miracle, but in such methods, and by such means, as may most conduce to his blessed ends. It is true, that all our good motions come from the Spirit of God; neither is it lesse true, that all the good counsels of others proceed from the same Spirit; & that good Spirit cannot be crosse to its selfe; he therefore that infu-

ſes good thoughts into us ſuggeſts alſo ſuch directions as may render us apt both to receive and improve them: If God be bounteous, we may not be idle, and neglective of our ſpirituall aids.

Sect. 2.

IF you tell me (by way of inſtance in a particular act of Devotion) that there is a gift of praier, and that the Spirit of God is not tied to rules; I yeeld both theſe; but withall, I muſt ſay there are alſo helps of prayer, and that we muſt not expect immediate inſpirations: I find the world much miſtaken in both; They think that

that man hath the gift of praier, that can utter the thoughts of his heart roundly unto God, that can expresse himselfe smoothly in the phrase of the holy Ghost, and presse God with most proper words, & passionate vehemence: And surely this is a commendable faculty whersoever it is: but this is not the gift of praier; you may call it, if you will, the gift of Elocution. Doe we say that man hath the gift of pleading, that can talk eloquently at the Barre, that can in good terms loud and earnestly importune the Judge for his Client; and not rather he that brings the strongest reason, and quotes his books, and precedents with most truth,

and cleareſt evidence, ſo as may convince the Jury, and perſwade the Judge? Do we ſay he hath the gift of Preaching, that can deliver himſelf in a flowing manner of ſpeech to his hearers, that can cite Scriptures, or Fathers, that can pleaſe his auditory with the flowers of Rhetorick; or rather, he, that can divide the Word aright, interpret it ſoundly, apply it judiciouſly, put it home to the Conſcience, ſpeaking in the evidence of the Spirit, powerfully convincing the gainſayers, comforting the dejected, and drawing every ſoul nearer to heaven? The like muſt we ſay for prayer; the gift whereof he may be truly ſaid to have, not that hath the

the most rennible tongue, (for prayer is not so much a matter of the lips, as of the heart) but he, that hath the most illuminated apprehension of the God to whom he speaks, the deepest sense of his own wants, the most eager longings after grace, the ferventest desires of supplies from heaven; and in a word, whose heart sends up the strongest groanes and cries to the Father of mercies.

Neither may we look for *Enthusiasmes*, and immediate inspirations; putting our selves upon Gods Spirit, in the solemn exercises of our invocation, without heed, or meditation; the dangerous inconvenience whereof hath been too often found in the rash, and unwarrantable expressions,

preſſions, that have fallen from the mouths of unwary ſuppliants; but we muſt addreſſe our ſelves with due preparation, to that holy worke; we muſt digeſt our ſutes; & fore-order our ſupplications to the Almighty; ſo that there may be excellent and neceſſary uſe of meet rules of our Devotion.

He, whoſe Spirit helps us to pray, and whoſe lips taught us how to pray, is an all-ſufficient example for us: all the skill of men, and Angels, cannot afford a more exquiſite model of ſupplicatory Devotion, than that bleſſed Saviour of ours gave us in the mount; led in by a divine, and heart-raiſing preface, carried out with a ſtrong and heavenly enforce-

forcement; wherein an awfull compellation makes way for petition; and petition makes way for thanksgiving; the petitions marshalled in a most exact order, for spirituall blessings, which have an immediate concernment of God, in the first place; then for temporall favours, which concern our selves, in the second; so punctuall a method had not been obserued by him that heareth praiers, if it had been all one to him, to have had our Deuotions confused, and tumultuary.

Sect. 3.

THere is commonly much mistaking of Deuotion, as if it were nothing

thing but an act of vocall praier, expiring with that holy breath, and revived with the next task of our invocations; which is usually measured of many, by frequence, length, smoothnesse of expression, lowdnes, vehemence; Whereas indeed it is rather an habituall disposition of an holy soul, sweetly conversing with God, in all the forms of an heavenly (yet awfull) familiarity; and a constant entertainment of our selves here below with the God of spirits, in our sanctified thoughts, and affections; One of the noble exercises whereof, is our accesse to the throne of grace in our prayers; whereto may be added, the ordering of our holy attendance

dance upon the bleſſed word and ſacraments of the Almighty: Nothing hinders therefore, but that a ſtammering ſuppliant may reach to a more eminent devotion, than he that can deliver himſelfe in the moſt fluent and patheticall forms of Elocution; and that our ſilence may be more devout than our noiſe. We ſhall not need to ſend you to the Cels or Cloyſters for this skill; although it will hardly be believed, how far ſome of their Contemplative men have gone in the Theory hereof; Perhaps, like as Chymiſts give rules for the attaining of that *Elixir*, which they never found; for ſure they muſt needs fail of that perfection they pretend;

tend; who erre commonly in the object of it, alwaies in the ground of it, which is faith; stripped, by their opinion, of the comfortablest use of it, certainty of application.

Sect. 4.

AS there may be many resemblances betwixt Light and Devotion, so this one especially; that as there is a light universally diffused through the aire, and there is a particular recollection of light into the body of the Sun and Stars; so it is in Devotion; There is a generall kind of Devotion that goes through the renewed heart and life of a Chri-

Christian, which we may term *Habituall*, and *Virtuall*; and there is a speciall, and fixed exercise of Devotion, which we name *Actuall*.

The soule that is rightly affected to God, is never void of an holy Devotion; where ever it is, what ever it doth, it is still lifted up to God, and fastned upon him; and converses with him; ever serving the Lord in feare, and rejoicing in him with trembling.

For the effectuall performance whereof, it is requisite first, that the heart be setled in a right apprehension of our God; without which, our Devotion is not thankleſſe only, but sinfull: With much labour therefore, & agitation of a mind illu-

illuminated from above, we must find our selves wrought to an high, awfull, adorative, and constant conceit of that incomprehensible Majesty, in whom we live, and move, and are; One God, in three most glorious Persons, infinite in wisdome, in power, in justice, in mercy, in providence, in all that he is, in all that he hath, in all that he doth; dwelling in light inaccessible, attended with thousand thousands of Angels; whom yet we neither can know, (neither would it avail us if we could) but in the face of the eternall Son of his Love, our blessed Mediatour God and Man; who sits at the right hand of Majesty in the highest hea-

heavens; from the sight of whose glorious humanity, we comfortably rise to the contemplation of that infinite Deity, whereto it is inseparably united; in and by him, (made ours by a lively Faith) finding our persons, and obedience accepted, expecting our ful redemption, and blessednesse. Here, here must our hearts be unremoveably fixed; In his light must we see light: no cloudy occurrences of this world, no busie imployments, no painful sufferings must hinder us from thus seeing him that is invisible.

Sect. 5.

NEither doth the devout heart see his God aloof off,

off, as dwelling above, in the circle of heaven, but beholds that infinite Spirit really present with him; *The Lord is upon thy right hand*; saith the Psalmist. Our bodily eie doth not more certainly see our own flesh, than the spirituall eie sees God, close by us; Yea, in us; A mans own soul is not so intimate to himselfe, as God is to his soule; neither do we move by him only, but in him: What a sweet conversation therefore, hath the holy soul with his God? What heavenly conferences have they two, which the world is not privy to; whiles God entertains the soul with the divine motions of his Spirit, the soul entertaines God with gracious compliances?

pliances? Is the heart heavy with the grievous preſſures of affliction? the ſoule goes in to his God, and pours out it ſelfe before him in earneſt bemoanings, and ſupplications; the God of mercy anſwers the ſoule again, with ſeaſonable refreſhings of comfort: Is the heart ſecretly wounded and bleeding with the conſcience of ſome ſinne? it ſpeedily betakes it ſelfe to the great Phyſician of the ſoul, who forthwith applies the balm of Gilead for an unfailing and preſent cure: Is the heart diſtracted with doubts? the ſoule retires to that inward Oracle of God for counſel, he returns to the ſoule an happy ſettlement of juſt reſolution: Is the heart deeply

affect-

affected with the ſenſe of ſome ſpeciall favour from his God? the ſoul breaks forth into the paſſionate voice of praiſe & thankſgiving; God returns the pleaſing teſtimony of a cheerful acceptation: Oh bleſſed ſoul, that hath a God to go unto upon all occaſions; Oh infinite mercy of a God, that vouchſafes to ſtoop to ſuch intireneſs with duſt & aſhes.

Dr. Preſton. It was a gracious ſpeech of a worthy Divine upon his death-bed, now breathing towards heaven, That he ſhould change his place not his company: His converſation was now before hand with his God, and his holy Angels; the only difference was, that he was now going to a more free and full fruition

tion of the Lord of life, in that region of glory above, whom he had truly (though with weakness and imperfection) injoied in this vale of tears.

Sect. 6.

NOw, that these mutuall respects may be sure not to coole with intermission, the devout heart takes all occasions both to think of God, and to speak to him. There is nothing that he sees, which doth not bring God to his thoughts. Indeed, there is no creature, wherein there are not manifest footsteps of omnipotence; Yea, which hath not a tongue to tell us of it's Maker. *The heaven declare the* Psa. 19. 1, 2.

the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work; one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another: Yea, O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdome haſt thou made them all: The earth is full of thy riches, ſo is the great and wide ſea, where are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts: Every herb, flower, ſpire of graſſe, every twig and leafe; every worm and flie; every ſcale and feather; every billow and meteor, ſpeaks the power and wiſdom of their infinite Creator; *Solomon* ſends the ſluggard to the Ant; *Eſay* ſends the Jews to the Oxe and the Aſſe; Our Saviour ſends his Diſciples to the Ravens, & to the Lillies of the field;

There

There is no creature of whom we may not learn ſomething; we ſhall have ſpent our time ill in this great ſchool of the world, if in ſuch ſtore of Leſſons, we be non-proficients in Devotion. Vaine Idolaters make to themſelves Images of God, whereby they ſinfully repreſent him to their thoughts and adoration; could they have the wit and grace to ſee it, God hath taken order to ſpare them this labor, in that he hath ſtamped in every creature ſuch impreſſions of his infinite power, wiſdome, goodneſs, as may give us juſt occaſion to worſhip and praiſe him with a ſafe and holy advantage to our ſoules: *For the inviſible things of God, from*

the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and Godhead. And indeed, wherfore ſerve all the volumes of Naturall Hiſtory, but to be ſo many Commentaries upon the ſeverall creatures, wherein we may read God; and even thoſe men who have not the skill, or leiſure to peruſe them, may yet out of their own thoughts, and obſervation, raiſe from the ſight of all the works of God ſufficient matter to glorifie him. Who can be ſo ſtupid as not to take notice of the induſtry of the Bee, the providence of the Ant, the cunning of the Spider, the reviving of the Flye, the worms endeavour of revenge,

venge, the ſubtilty of the Fox, the ſagacity of the Hedge-hog, the innocence and profitableneſſe of the Sheep, the laborioufneſs of the Oxe, the obſequiouſneſs of the Dog, the timorous ſhifts of the Hare, the nimbleneſſe of the Deer, the generoſity of the Lion, the courage of the Horſe, the fierceneſſe of the Tiger, the chearful muſick of Birds, the harmleſneſſe of the Dove, the true love of the Turtle, the Cocks obſervation of time, the Swallows architecture, ſhortly, (for it were eaſie here to be endleſſe) of the ſeverall qualities, and diſpoſitions of every of thoſe our fellow-creatures, with whom we converſe on the face of the earth; and

who that takes notice of them, cannot fetch from every act, and motion of theirs, ſome monition of duty and occaſion of devout thoughts? Surely, I fear many of us Chriſtians, may juſtly accuſe our ſelves as too neglective of our duty this way; that having thus long ſpent our time in this great Academy of the world, we have not, by ſo many ſilent documents, learned to aſcribe more glory to our Creator; I doubt thoſe creatures if they could exchange their brutality with our reaſon, being now ſo docible as to learn of us ſo far as their ſenſe can reach, would approve themſelves better Scholars to us, than we have been unto them.

Withall,

Withall, I must add that the devout soul stands not alwaies in need of such outward monitors, but finds within it selfe, sufficient incitements to raise up it selfe to a continuall minding of God; and makes use of them accordingly; and, if at any time, being taken up with importunate occasions of the world, it finds God missing but an hour, it chides it self for such neglect, and sets it selfe to recover him with so much more eager affection: as the faithful Spouse in the *Canticles*, when she finds him whom her soul loved, withdrawn from her for a season, puts her selfe into a speedy search after him, and gives not over til she have have attained his presence. Cant. 5. 6.

Sect. 7.

NOw as these many monitors both [outward & inward, must elevate our hearts very frequently, to God; so those raised hearts must not entertein him with a dumb contemplation, but must speak to him in the language of spirits: All occasions therefore must be taken of sending forth pious & heavenly ejaculations to God; The devout soul may doe this more than an hundred times a day, without any hindrance to his speciall vocation: The Huswife at her Wheel, the Weaver at his Loom, the Husbandman at his Plough, the Artificer in his Shop, the

the Traveller in his way, the Merchant in his Warehouse may thus enjoy God in his busiest imploiment; For, the soule of man is a nimble spirit; and the language of thoughts need not take up time; and though we now, for examples sake cloath them in words, yet in our practice we need not: Now these *Ejaculations* may be either *at large*, or *Occasionall*: At large, such as that of old *Jacob*, *O Lord, I have waited for thy salvation*; Or that of *David*, *O save me for thy mercies sake*: And these either in matter of *Humiliation*, or of *Imploration*, or of *Thanksgiving*: In all which, we cannot follow a better pattern then the sweet singer of *Israel*, whose heavenly

conceptions we may either borrow, or imitate.

In way of *humiliation*, such as these. *Heal my soul, O Lord, for I have sinned against thee.* Psa 41.4.
Oh remember not my old sins, but have mercy upon me. 79.8.
If thou wilt be extreme to mark what is done amisse, O Lord: who may abide it? 130.3.
Lord, thou knowest the thoughts of man that they are but vain. 94.11.
O God why abhorrest thou my soule, and hidest thy face from me.

In way of *Imploration*. *Up Lord, and help me O God; Oh let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.* 3.7.
Lord, where are thy old loving mercies? Oh deliver me, for I am helpless, and my heart is wounded within me. 89.48. 109.21.
Comfort the soul of thy servant, for unto thee, O Lord, doe I lift up 86.4.

my

my soule. Go not far from me, O God. O knit my heart unto thee that I may fear thy name. Thou art my helper and redeemer, O Lord make no long tarrying. Oh be thou my help in trouble, for vain is the help of man. Oh guide me with thy counsel, and after that receive me to thy glory. My time is in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of mine enemies. Oh withdraw not thy mercy from me, O Lord. Lead me O Lord, in thy righteousnesse because of mine enemies. O let my soul live, and it shall praise thee.

Psa. 71. 10
86. 11.
70. 6.
60. 11.
71. 23.
31. 17.
40. 14.
5. 8.
119. penult.

In way of Thanksgiving:

Oh God, wonderfull art thou in thine holy places. O Lord, how glorious are thy works! & thy thoughts are very deep. Oh God, who is like unto thee! The Lord, liveth, and blessed

68. 35.
92. 5.
71. 17.
18. 47.

be my ſtrong helper. Lord,
Pſa. 63. 4. thy loving kindneſſe is better
than life it ſelf. All thy works
145. 10. praiſe thee, O Lord, and thy
Saints give thanks unto thee.
104. 25. Oh how manifold are thy
works! in wiſdome haſt thou
made them all. Who is God but
18. 31. the Lord, and who hath any
ſtrength except our God? We
20. 5. will rejoice in thy ſalvation,
and triumph in thy name, O
Lord. O that men would praiſe
107. 8. the Lord for his goodneſſe. Oh
31. 21. how plentifull is thy goodneſſe,
which thou haſt laid up for
them that fear thee! Thou Lord
9. 10. haſt never failed them that
ſeek thee. In thy preſence is the
16. 12. fulneſſe of joy, and at thy right
hand there is pleaſure for e-
vermore. Lord, what is man
8. 4. that thou art mindfull of him?
115. 1. Not unto us Lord, not unto us,

but

but unto thy Name give the praise.

Sect. 8.

Occasionall Ejaculations are such, as are moved upon the presence of some such object, as carries a kind of relation or analogy to that holy thought which we have entertained. Of this nature I find that, which was practised in St *Basil's* time; that, upon the lighting of candles, the manner was to bless God in these words, praise be to God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy ghost; which that Father saies was anciently used; but who was the Author of it he professeth to be unknown

known: to the same purpose was the *Lucernarium*, which was a part of the evening office of old; For which, there may seem to be more colour of reason, than for the ordinary fashion of apprecation, upon occasion of our sneesing; which is expected, and practised by many, out of civility: Old and reverend *Beza* was wont to move his hat with the rest of the company, but to say withall, *Gramercy Madam la Superstition*; Now howsoever in this, or any other practice, which may seem to carry with it a smack of Superstition, our Devotion may be groundless and unseasonable, yet nothing hinders but that we may take just & holy hints of raising

up

up our hearts to our God. As when we do first look forth, and see the heavens over our heads, to thinke, *The heavens declare thy glory O God.* Psal. 19. 1. When we see the day breaking, or the Sun rising, *The day is thine, and the night is thine, thou hast prepared the light and the Sunne.* 74. 17. When the light shines in our faces, *Thou deckest thy self with light as with a garment*; 97. 11. or, *Light is sprung up for the righteous.* 36. 9. When we see our Garden imbellished with flowers, *The earth is full of the goodnesse of the Lord.* 39. 5. When we see a rough sea, *The waves of the sea rage horribly, and are mighty; but the Lord that dwelleth on high, is mightier then they.* 93. 5. When we see the darkenesse of the night,

light: the darkneſſe is no
Pſa.139.11 darkneſſe unto thee. When we
riſe up from our bed, or our
139.2. ſeat, *Lord, thou knoweſt my down-ſitting & my up-riſing; thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off.* When we waſh our
51.7. hands, *waſh thou me, O Lord, and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* When we are walking
17.5. forth, *O hold thou up my goings in thy paths, that my foot-ſteps ſlip not.* When we hear a paſſing-bell, *Oh teach me to*
90.12. *number my daies, that I may apply my heart to wiſdome*: or,
39.5. *Lord, let me know my end, and the number of my daies.*

Thus may we dart out our holy deſires to God, upon all occaſions. Wherein, heed muſt be taken that our Ejaculations be not, on the one ſide, ſo rare, that our hearts

hearts grow to be hard and ſtrange to God, but that they may be held on in continual acknowledgement of him, and acquaintance with him; and, on the other ſide, that they be not ſo overfrequent in their perpetual reiteration, as that they grow to be (like that of the Romiſh votaries) faſhionable; which if great care be not taken, will fall out, to the utter fruſtrating of our Devotion. Shortly, let the meaſure of theſe devout glances be, the preſerving our hearts in a conſtant tenderneſs, & godly diſpoſition; which ſhal be further actuated upon all opportunities, by the exerciſes of our more enlarged, and fixed Devotion. Whereof there is

the

the ſame variety that there is in Gods ſervices, about which it is converſant.

There are three maine buſineſſes wherein God accounts his ſervice, here below, to conſiſt; The firſt is, our addreſs to the throne of Grace, and the pouring out of our ſouls before him in our praiers: The ſecond is, the reading and hearing his moſt holy Word; The third is, the receit of his bleſſed Sacraments; In all which there is place and uſe for a ſetled Devotion.

Sect. 9.

TO begin with the firſt work of our actual, & enlarged Devotion: Some things

things are pre-required of us, to make us capable of the comfortable performance of ſo holy and heavenly a duty; namely, that the heart be clean firſt, and then that it be cleare: clean from the defilement of any known ſin; clear from all intanglements and diſtractions: What do wee in our praiers, but converſe with the Almighty? and either carry our ſoules up to him, or bring him down to us; now, it is no hoping, that we can entertaine God in an impure heart: Even we men loath a naſty and ſluttiſh lodging; how much more wil the holy God abhorre an habitation ſpiritually filthy? I find that even the *unclean ſpirit* made that a mo-

a motive of his repoſſeſſion, that he found *the houſe ſwept and garniſhed*: Satans cleanlineſſe is pollution; and his garniſhment, diſorder and wickedneſſe; without this he finds no welcome; Each ſpirit looks for an entertainment anſwerable to his nature; How much more will that God of ſpirits, who is purity it ſelfe, look to be harboured in a cleanly room? *Into a malicious ſoul wiſdome ſhall not enter, nor dwel in the body that is ſubject unto ſin.* What friend would be pleaſed that we ſhould lodge him in a *Lazar houſe*? or who would abide to have a Toad lie in his boſome? Surely, it is not in the verge of created nature to yield any thing that can be ſo noiſome

Luk. 11. 25.

Wiſd. 1. 4.

ſome & odious to the ſenſe of man, as ſin is to that abſolute, and eſſentiall Goodneſſe: His pure eies cannot indure the ſight of ſin; neither can he indure that the ſinner ſhould come within the ſight of him; *Away from me yee wicked*, is his charge, both here and hereafter. It is the priviledge and happineſſe of the pure in heart, that they ſhall ſee God; ſee him both in the end, and in the way; enjoying the viſion of him, both in grace, and in glory: this is no object for impure eies: Deſcend into thy ſelf therefore, and ranſack thy heart, who ever wouldſt be a true Client of Deovtion; ſearch all the cloſe windings of it, with the torches of the law

of

of God; and if there be any iniquity found lurking in the ſecret corners therof, drag it out and abandon it; and when thou haſt done, that thy fingers may retaine no pollution, ſay with the holy Pſalmiſt; *I will waſh my hands in innocence, ſo will I go to thine Altar.* Preſume not to approach the Altar of God, there to offer the Sacrifice of thy Devotion, with unclean hands: Elſe thine offering ſhall be ſo far from winning an acceptance for thee, from the hands of God; as that thou ſhalt make thine offering abominable. And if a beaſt touch the Mount, it ſhall die.

Pſa. 26.6.

Sect. 10.

AS the ſoule muſt be clean from ſin, ſo it muſt be clear and free from diſtractions. The intent of our Devotion is to welcome God to our hearts; now where ſhall we entertain him, if the rooms be full thronged with cares, and turbulent paſſions? The Spirit of God will not endure to be crowded up together with the world in our ſtraight lodgings; An holy vacuity muſt make way for him in our boſoms. The divine pattern of Devotion, in whom the Godhead dwelt bodily, retires into the Mount to pray; he that carried heaven with him,

him, would even thus leave the world below him. Alas, how can we hope to mount up to heaven in our thoughts, if we have the clogs of earthly cares hanging at our heels: Yea, not only muſt there be a ſhutting out of all diſtractive cares, and paſſions, which are profeſſed enemies to our quiet converſing with God in our Devotion, but there muſt be alſo a denudation of the mind from all thoſe images of our phantaſie (how pleaſing ſoever) that may carry our thoughts aſide from thoſe better objects: We are like to fooliſh children, who when they ſhould be ſtedfaſtly looking on their books, are apt to gaze after every butter-fly, that

that passeth by them; here must be therefore a carefull intention of our thoughts, a restraint from all vain, and idle rovings, and an holding our selves close to our divine task: Whiles *Martha* is troubled about many things, her devouter sister, having chosen the better part, plies the one thing necessary, which shal never be taken from her; and whiles *Martha* would feast Christ with bodily fare, she is feasted of Christ with heavenly delicacies.

Sect. 11.

After the heart is thus cleansed & thus cleared, it must be in the next place

place decked with true humility, the cheapeſt, yet beſt ornament of the ſoul. If the wiſe man tel us, *that pride is the beginning of ſin*; ſurely, all gracious diſpoſitions muſt begin in humility. The foundation of all high and ſtately buildings muſt be laid low: They are the lowly vallies that ſoake in the ſhowres of heaven, which the ſteep hils ſhelve off, and prove dry and fruitleſſe. *To that man will I look* (ſaith God) *that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my Word*: Hence it is, that the more eminent any man is in grace, the more he is dejected in the ſight of God; The father of the faithfull comes to God under the ſtile of *duſt and aſhes: David* under

Eccl. 10.

Eſa. 66, 2.

Gen. 18. 27

under the ſtile of *a worm and no man*; *Agur* the ſon of *Jakeh*, under the title of *more bruti ſh than any man, and one that hath not the underſtanding of a man*; John Baptiſt, *as not worthy to carry the ſhooes of Chriſt after him*; Paul, *as the leaſt of Saints, and chiefe of ſinners*: On the contrary, the more vile any man is in his own eies, and the more dejected in the ſight of God, the higher he is exalted in Gods favour: Like as the Conduit-water, by how much lower it fals, the higher it riſeth. When therefore we would appear before God, in our ſolemn devotions, we muſt ſee that we empty our ſelves of all proud conceits, and find our hearts fully convinced of

Pro. 30. 2.

Mat. 3. 11.

Ephes. 3. 8.

our own vileneſſe, yea, nothingneſs in his ſight. Down, down with all our high thoughts; fall we low before our great and holy God; not to the earth only, but to the very brim of hel, in the Conſcience of our own guiltineſſe; for though the miſerable wretchedneſs of our nature may be a ſufficient cauſe of our humiliation, yet the conſideration of our deteſtable ſinfulneſſe, is that which will depreſſe us loweſt in the ſight of God.

Sect. 12.

IT is fit the exerciſe of our Devotion ſhould begin in an humble confeſſion of our unworthineſſe. Now for

for the effectual furtherance of this our self-dejection, it will be requisite to bend our eies upon a threefold object; To look inward into our selves, upward to heaven, downwards to hell. First, to turn our eies into our bosomes, and to take a view (not without a secret self-loathing) of that world of corruption that hath lien hidden there; & thereupon to accuse, arraign, and condemn our selves before that awful tribunal of the Judge of heaven and earth; both of that originall pollution, which we have drawn from the tainted loins of our first parents; and those innumerable actuall wickednesses derived there-from; which have stained our persons

and lives. How can we be but throughly humbled, to ſee our ſouls utterly over-ſpread with the odious and abominable leproſie of ſin: We find that *Uzziah* bore up ſtoutly a while, againſt the Prieſts of the Lord, in the maintenance of his ſacrilegious preſumption, but when he ſaw himſelf turn'd *Lazar*, on the ſudden, he is confounded in himſelfe, and in a depth of ſhame haſtens away from the preſence of God to a ſad and penitentiall retiredneſs. We ſhould need no other arguments to loath our ſelves, than the ſight of our own faces, ſo miſerably deformed with the naſty and hateful ſcurfe of our iniquity: Neither only muſt we be content to ſhame,

ſhame, and grieve our eies with the foul nature and condition of our ſins, but we muſt repreſent them to our ſelves in all the circumſtances that may aggravate their hainouſneſſe. Alas, Lord, any one ſin is able to damn a ſoul; I have committed many, yea, numberleſſe: they have not poſſeſſed me ſingle, but, as that evill ſpirit ſaid, their name is *Legion*; neither have I committed theſe ſins once, but often; thine Angels (that were) ſinned but once, and are damned for ever; I have frequently reiterated the ſame offences, where (then were it not for thy mercy) ſhall I appear? neither have I only done them in the time of my ignorance, but ſince I received

ſufficient illumination from thee; It is not in the darke that I have ſtumbled, and falne, but in the midſt of the clear light and ſun-ſhine of thy Goſpel, and in the very face of thee my God, neither have theſe been the ſlips of my weakneſſe, but the bold miſcarriages of my preſumption; neither have I offended out of inconſideration and inadvertency, but after and againſt the checks of a remurmuring conſcience; after ſo many gracious warnings, and fatherly admonitions, after ſo many fearfull examples of thy judgements, after ſo infinite obligations of thy favours.

And thus having looked inward into our ſelves, and taken an impartiall view of our

our own vileneſſe, it will be requiſite to caſt our eies upward unto heaven, and there to ſee againſt whom we have offended; even againſt an infinite Majeſty, & power, an infinite mercy, an infinite juſtice; That power and Majeſty which hath ſpread out the heavens as a Curtain, and hath laid the foundations of the earth ſo ſure that it cannot be moved; who hath ſhut up the ſea with bars and doors, and ſaid, Hitherto ſhalt thou come and no further, and here ſhalt thou ſtay thy proud waves; who doth whatſoever he will in heaven and in earth; who commandeth the Devils to their chains, able therfore to take infinite vengeance on ſin-

Job 38.

ners. That mercy of God the Father, who gave his own Son out of his boſome for our redemption; That mercy of God the Son, who thinking it no robbery to be equall unto God, for our ſakes made himſelfe of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant; and being found in faſhion as a man, humbled himſelf, and became obedient to the death, even the accurſed death of the Croſſe; That mercy of God the holy Ghoſt, who hath made that Chriſt mine, and hath ſealed to my ſoule the benefit of that bleſſed Redemption; Laſtly, that juſtice of God, which as it is infinitely diſpleaſed with every ſin, ſo will be ſure to take infinite ven-

Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8, &c.

vengeance on every impenitent ſinner.

And from hence it wil be fit and ſeaſonable for the devout ſoul, to look downward into that horrible pit of eternall confuſion; and there to ſee the dreadful, unſpeakable, unimaginable torments of the damned; to repreſent unto it ſelfe the terrors of thoſe everlaſting burnings; the fire and brimſtone of that infernall Tophet; the mercileſſe and unwearible tyranny of thoſe helliſh executioners; the ſhrieks, and howlings, and gnaſhings of the tormented; the unpitiable, interminable, unmitigable tortures of thoſe ever-dying, and yet never-dying ſouls. By all which, we ſhall juſtly af-

fright our ſelves into a deep ſenſe of the dangerous and wofull condition wherein we lie in the ſtate of nature and impenitence, and ſhal be driven with an holy eagerneſſe to ſeek for Chriſt, the Son of the ever-living God, our bleſſed Mediator; in and by whom only, we can look for the remiſſion of all theſe our ſins, a reconcilement with this moſt powerfull, merciſull, juſt God, and a deliverance of our ſoules from the hand of the nethermoſt hell.

Sect. 13.

IT ſhall not now need, or boot to bid the ſoule which is truly apprehenſive of all theſe, to ſue importunatly

natly to the Lord of life for a freedom, and rescue from these infinite pains of eternal death, to which our sins have forfeited it; and for a present happy recovery of that favour, which is better than life. Have we heard, or can we imagine some hainous Malefactor, that hath received the sentence of death, and is now bound hand, and foot, ready to be cast into a Den of Lions, or a burning furnace, with what strong cries, and passionate obsecrations he plies the Judge for mercy? we may then conceive some little image of the vehement sute, and strong cries of a soul truly sensible of the danger of Gods wrath deserved by his sin, and the dread-

dreadful consequents of deserved imminent damnation; Although what proportion is there betwixt a weak creature, and the Almighty; betwixt a moment, and eternity?

Hereupon therefore followes a vehement longing (uncapable of a denial) after Christ; and fervent aspirations to that Saviour, by whom only we receive a ful and gracious deliverance from death and hell; and a full pardon and remission of all our sins; and if this come not the sooner, strong knockings at the gates of heaven, even so loud that the Father of mercies cannot but hear & open: Never did any contrite soul beg of God, that was not prevented

ted by his mercy; much more doth he condeſcend when he is ſtrongly intreated; our very intreaties are from him, he puts into us thoſe deſires which he graciouſly anſwers: Now therfore doth the devout ſoule ſee the God of all comfort to bow the heavens, and come down with healing in his wings; and heare him ſpeak peace unto the heart thus throughly humbled; Fear not, thou ſhalt not die but live. Be of good cheare, thy ſins are forgiven thee: Here therefore comes in that divine grace of Faith, effectually apprehending Chriſt the Saviour, and his infinite ſatisfaction and merits; comfortably applying all the ſweet promiſes of the

the Gospel; clinging close to that all-sufficient Redeemer; and in his most perfect obedience emboldning it selfe, to challenge a freedome of accesse to God, and confidence of appearance before the Tribunal of heaven; and now the soule clad with Christs righteousnesse, dares look God in the face, and can both challenge and triumph over all the powers of darkenesse: For, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Rom. 5. 1.

Sect. 14.

BY how much deeper the sense of our misery and danger is, so much more welcome and joifull is the appre-

apprehenſion of our deliverance; and ſo much more thankfull is our acknowledgement of that unſpeakable mercy: The ſoul therefore that is truly ſenſible of this wonderfull goodneſs of its God; as it feels a marvellous joy in it ſelfe, ſo it cannot but break forth into cheerfull and holy (though ſecret) gratulations: *The Lord is full of compaſſion, and mercy, long ſuffering, and of great goodnes; he keepeth not his anger for ever; he hath not dealt with me after my ſins, nor rewarded me after mine iniquities. What ſhal I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will thank thee for thou haſt heard me, & haſt*

Pſal. 103, 8.

Pſal. 116. 12, 13.

Pſal. 119. 18, 21, &c.

haſt not given me over to death, but art become my ſalvation. O ſpeak good of the Lord all ye works of his; Praiſe thou the Lord O my ſoul.

Sect. 15.

THe more feelingly the ſoul apprehends, and the more thankfully it digeſts the favours of God in its pardon, and deliverance, the more freely doth the God of mercy impart himſelf to it; and the more God imparts himſelfe to it, the more it loves him, and the more heavenly acquaintance and entireneſſe grows betwixt God and it; & now that love which was but a ſpark at firſt grows into a flame; and wholly takes up the ſoul. This fire of heavenly love in the devout ſoul, is,

and

& muſt be heightned more and more, by the addition of the holy incentives of divine thoughts concerning the means of our freedome and deliverance. And here, offers it ſelfe to us that bottomleſſe abyſſe of mercy in our Redemption, wrought by the eternall Son of God, Jeſus Chriſt the juſt, by whoſe ſtripes we are heal'd; by whoſe blood we are ranſomed; where none will befit us but admiring and adoring notions. We ſhall not diſparage you, O ye bleſſed Angels, and Arch-angels of Heaven, if we ſhall ſay, ye are not able to look into the bottome of this divine love, wherwith God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever

ver beleeveth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everla-ſting life: None, oh none can comprehend this mercy, but he that wrought it. Lord! what a tranſcendent, what an infinite love is this? what an object was this for thee to love? A world of ſinners? Impotent, wretched crea-tures, that had deſpighted thee, that had no motive for thy favour but deformity, miſery, profeſſed enmity? It had been mercy enough in thee, that thou didſt not damn the world; but that thou ſhouldſt love it, is more then mercy. It was thy great goodneſſe to forbear the acts of juſt vengeance to the ſinful world of man; but to give unto it tokens of thy love, is a favour beyond all ex-

expreſſion. The leaſt gift from thee had been more than the world could hope for; but that thou ſhouldſt not ſtick to give thine only begotten Son, the Son of thy love, the Son of thine eſſence, thy coequal, coeternal Son, who was more then ten thouſand worlds, to redeem this one forlorn world of ſinners, is love above all comprehenſion of men and Angels. What diminution had it been to thee and thine eſſentiall glory, O thou great God of heaven, that the ſouls that ſinned ſhould have died, and periſhed everlaſtingly? yet ſo infinite was thy loving mercy, that thou wouldeſt rather give thy onely Sonne out of thy boſome, than

than that there ſhould not be a redemption for beleevers.

Yet, O God, hadſt thou ſent down thy Son to this lower region of earth, upon ſuch termes, as that he might have brought down heaven with him, that he might have come in the port and Majeſty of a God, cloathed with celeſtial glory, to have dazeled our eies, and to have drawn all hearts unto him; this might have ſeemed in ſome meaſure, to have ſorted with his divine magnificence; But thou wouldſt have him to appear in the wretched condition of our humanity: Yet, even thus, hadſt thou ſent him into the world, in the higheſt eſtate, and pomp of roialty, that

that earth could afford, that all the Kings and Monarchs of the world ſhould have been commanded to follow his train, and to glitter in his Court; and that the knees of all the Potentates of the earth ſhould have bowed to his Soveraign Majeſty, and their lips have kiſſed his duſt, this might have carried ſome kind of appearance of a ſtate next to divine greatneſſe; but thou wouldſt have him come in the deſpiſed form of a ſervant: And thou, O bleſſed Jeſu, waſt accordingly willing for our ſakes to ſubmit thy ſelf to nakedneſſe, hunger, thirſt, wearineſſe, temptation, contempt, betraying, agonies, ſcorn, buffeting, ſcourgings, diſtention, crucifixion, death: Oh love

love above measure, without example, beyond, admiration! Greater love (thou saiest) hath no man, than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; But, oh, what is it then that thou, who wert God and man, shouldst lay down thy life, (more precious then many worlds) for thine enemies! Yet, had it been but the laying down of a life, in a fair and gentle way, there might have been some mitigation of the sorrow of a dissolution; there is not more difference betwixt life and death, then there may be betwixt some one kind of death & another; Thine, O dear Saviour, was the painfull, shamefull, cursed death of the crosse; wherein yet, all,

all that man could do unto thee was nothing to that inward torment, which, in our stead, thou endured'st from thy fathers wrath; when in the bitterness of thine anguished soul, thou cried'st out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Even thus, thus wast thou content to be forsaken, that we wretched sinners might be received to mercy; O love stronger then death which thou vanquish'dst! more high, than that hell is deep, from which thou hast rescued us!

Sect. 16.

THe sense of this infinite love of God cannot chuse but ravish the soul,

soul, and cause it to goe out of it self, into that Saviour who hath wrought so mercifully for it; so as it may be nothing in it self, but what it hath, or is, may be Christs. By the sweet powers therefore of Faith and Love the soul finds it self united unto Christ, feelingly, effectually, indivisibly: so as that it is not to be distinguished betwixt the acts of both:

Phil. 1. 21. *To me to live is Christ*, saith the blessed Apostle; and

Gal. 2. 20. elsewhere, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which now I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me,*

Cant. 2. 16. *and gave himself for me. My beloved is mine, and I am his*, saith the Spouse of Christ in her Bridall Song. O blessed

sed union, next to the hypostaticall, whereby the humane nature of the Son of God is taken into the participation of the eternall Godhead.

Sect. 17.

OUt of the sense of this happy union ariseth an unspeakable complacency and delight of the soul in that God and Saviour, who is thus inseparably ours, and by whose union we are blessed; and an high appreciation of him above all the world, and a contemptuous under-valuation of all earthly things, in comparison of him; And this is no other then an heavenly reflection of that sweet con-

tentment, which the God of mercies takes in the faithful soul; *Thou hast ravisht my heart, my sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravisht my heart with one of thine eies. Thou art beautifull, O my Love, as* Tirzah, *comely as* Jerusalem; *Turn away thine eies from me, for they have overcome me. How fair is thy love, my sister, my Spouse? How much better is thy love then wine, and the smell of thine ointments better than all spices.* And the soul answers him againe in the same language of spirituall dearnesse; *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is as strong as death:* And as in an ecstaticall qualm of passionate

Cant. 4. 9. 6. 4, 5.

Cant. 5. 10.

8. 6.

sionate affection; *Stay me with flaggons, and comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love.* 2.5.

Sect. 18.

VPon this gracious complacency wil follow an absolute self-resignation, or giving up our selves to the hands of that good God, whose we are, and who is ours; and an humble contentednesse with his good pleasure in all things; looking upon God with the same face, whether he smile upon us in his favours, or chastise us with his loving corrections; If he speak good unto us, *Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word;* If evill, *It is the*

Lord, let him do whatsoever he will: Here is therefore a cheerfull acquiescence in God; & an hearty reliance, and casting our selves upon the mercy of so bountifull a God; who having given us his Son, can in and with him deny us nothing.

Sect. 19.

UPon this subacted disposition of heart will follow a familiar (yet awfull) compellation of God; and an emptying of our souls before him in all our necessities. For that God, who is infinitely mercifull, yet will not have his favours otherwise conveighed to us than by our supplications. The stile of his dear ones is, his people

people that praieth, and his own ſtile is, the God that heareth praiers: To him therefore doth the devout heart pour out all his requeſts with all true humility, with all fervor of ſpirit, as knowing, that God will hear neither proud prayers, nor heartleſſe: wherein his holy deſires are regulated by a juſt method; Firſt, ſuing for ſpirituall favours, as moſt worthy; then for temporal, as the appendances of better; and in both, aiming at the glory of our good God, more then our own advantage: And in the order of ſpirituall things, firſt and moſt for thoſe that are moſt neceſſary, and eſſentiall for our ſouls health, than for ſecondary graces, that con-

cern the prosperity & comfort of our spiritual life: Absolutely craving those graces that accompany salvation, all others, conditionally, and with reference to the good pleasure of the munificent giver; Wherein, heed must be taken, that our thoughts be not so much taken up with our expressions as with our desires; and that we do not suffer our selves to languish into an unfeeling length, and repetition of our sutes: Even the hands of a *Moses*, may in time grow heavy; so therefore must we husband our spirituall strength, that our devotion may not flag with over-tiring, but may be most vigorous at the last. And as we must enter into

our

our prayers, not without preparatory elevations, so must we be carefull to take a meet leave of God, at their shutting up: following our supplications, with the pause of a faithfull, and most lowly adoration; and as it were sending up our hearts into heaven, to see how our praiers are taken; and raising them to a joiful expectation of a gracious and successful answer from the father of mercies.

Sect. 20.

VPon the comfortable feeling of a gracious condescent, follows an happy fruition of God in all his favours; so as we have not them so much, as God in them; which advanceth

their worth a thousand fold and as it were brings down heaven unto us; whereas, therefore, the sensuall man rests only in the meer use of any blessing, as health, peace, prosperity, knowledge, and reacheth no higher; the devout soul, in, and through all these, sees, and feels a God that sanctifies them to him, and enjoies therein his favour, that is better than life. Even we men are wont, out of our good nature, to esteem a benefit, not so much for its own worth, as for the love, and respect of the giver: Small legacies for this cause, find deare acceptation; How much more is it so betwixt God and the devout soul? It is the sweet apprehension of

of this love that makes all his gifts, blessings. Do we not see some vaine churle, though cried down by the multitude, herein secretly applauding himselfe that he hath bags at home; how much more shall the godly man find comfort against all the crosses of the world, that he is possessed of him that possesseth all things; even God All-sufficient; the pledges of whose infinite love he feels in all the whole course of Gods dealing with him?

Sect. 21.

OUt of the true sense of this inward fruition of God, the devout soul breaks forth into cheerfull thanks-

givings to the God of all comfort, praising him for every evill that it is free from; for every good thing it enjoieth: For, as it keeps a just Inventory of all Gods favours, so it often spreads them thankfully before him and laies them forth (so near as it may) in the full dimensions; that so, God may be no loser by him in any act of his beneficence. Here therefore every of Gods benefits must come into account; whether eternall or temporall, spirituall or bodily, outward or inward, publike or private, positive or privative, past or present, upon our selves or others. In all which, he shall humbly acknowledge both Gods free mercy, and his

his own shamefull unworthinesse; setting off the favours of his good God the more, with the foile of his own confessed wretchednes, and unanswerableness to the least of his mercies.

Now as there is infinite variety of blessings from the liberall hand of the Almighty, so there is great difference in their degrees; For wheras there are three subjects of all the good we are capable of; The Estate, Body, Soul; and each of these doe far surpasse other in value, (the soul being infinitely more worth then the body, and the body far more precious then the outward estate) so the blessings that appertain to them, in severall, differ in their true esti-

mation

mation accordingly. If either we do not highly magnifie Gods mercy for the leaſt, or ſhall ſet as high a price upon the bleſſings that concern our eſtate, as thoſe that pertain to the body, or upon bodily favours, as upon thoſe that belong to the ſoul, we ſhall ſhew our ſelves very unworthy, and unequall partakers of the Divine bounty. But it will ſavour too much of earth, if we be more affected with temporall bleſſings, than with ſpiritual and eternall. By how much nearer relation then, any favor hath to the fountain of goodneſſe, and by how much more it conduceth to the glory of God, ond ours in him, ſo much higher place

place ſhould it poſſeſſe in our affection and gratitude. No marvel therefore if the Devout Heart be raiſed above it ſelf, and tranſported with heavenly raptures, when, with *Stephens* eies, it beholds the Lord Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God, fixing it ſelf upon the conſideration of the infinite Merits of his Life, Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Intercеſſion, & finding it ſelfe ſwallowed up in the depth of that Divine Love, from whence all mercies flow into the ſoule; ſo as that it runs over with paſſionate thankfulneſs, and is therefore deeply affected with all other his mercies, becauſe they are derived from that boundleſs Ocean of

of Divine goodneſſe. Unſpeakable is the advantage that the ſoule raiſes to it ſelf by this continuall exerciſe of thankſgiving; for the grateful acknowledgement of favours, is the way to more; even amongſt men (whoſe hands are ſhort and ſtrait) this is the means to pull on further beneficence; how much more from the God of all Conſolation, whoſe largeſt bounty diminiſheth nothing of his ſtore? And herein the devout Soul enters into its heavenly Task; beginning upon earth thoſe Hallelujahs, which it ſhall perfect above in the bleſſed Chore of Saints and Angels, ever praiſing God, and ſaying, *Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdome, and Thanksgiving,*

giving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Sect. 22.

NOne of all the services of God can be acceptably, no not unsinfully performed without due devotion; as therefore in our prayers and thanksgivings, so in the other exercises of Divine Worship, (especially, in the reading and hearing of Gods Word, and in our receipt of the blessed Sacrament) it is so necessary, that without it, we offer to God a meer carcasse of religious duty, and profane that sacred name we would pretend to honour. First then, we must come to Gods

Book,

Book, not without an holy Reverence, as duly considering both what and whose it is; Even no other, than the Word of the ever-living God, by which we shall once be judged. Great reason have we therefore, to make a difference betwixt it, and the writings of the Holiest men, even no lesse than betwixt the Authors of both: God is true, yea, truth it self: and that which *David* said in his haste, St *Paul* saies in full deliberation, *Every man is a lyer*. Before we put our hand to this Sacred Volume, it will be requisite to elevate our hearts to that God whose it is, for both his leave and his blessing: *Open mine eies*, saith the sweet singer of Israel, *that I may behold*

Psal. 116. Rom. 3. 4.

Psal. 119. 8.

hold the wondrous things of thy Law. Lo, *Davids* eies were open before to other objects; but when he comes to *Gods* Book, he can see nothing without a new act of apertion: Letters he might see, but wonders he could not see, till God did unclose his eies, and enlighten them. It is not therefore for us presumptuously to break in upon God, and to think by our naturall abilities to wrest open the precious Caskets of the Almighty; and to fetch out all his hidden treasure thence, at pleasure; but we must come tremblingly before him, and in all humility crave his gracious admission. I confesse I finde some kinde of envy in my selfe, when I read of those scru-

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pulous observances of high respects given by the Jewes to the Book of Gods Law: and when I read of a Romish Saint, that never read the Scripture, but upon his knees, and compare it with the carelesse neglect whereof I can accuse my self, and perhaps some others: Not that we should rest in the formality of outward Ceremonies of reverence, wherein it were more easie to be superstitious than devout; but that our outward deportment may testifie, & answer the awfull disposition of our hearts: whereto we shall not need to be excited, if we be throughly perswaded of the Divine Originall, and authority of that Sacred Word. It was motive

Carolus Borromæus.

motive enough to the *Ephesians* zealously to plead for, and religiously to adore the Image of their *Diana*, that it was *the Image that fell down from Jupiter*. Beleeve we, and know, that the Scripture is inspired by God; and we can entertein it with no other than an awful addresse, and we cannot be Christians if we do not so beleeve. Acts 19.35.

Every Clause therefore of that God-inspired Volume, must be, as reverently received by us, so seriously weighed, and carefully laid up; as knowing, that there is no tittle there without his use. What we read, we must labour to understand; what we cannot understand, we must admire silently, and modestly enquire of

of. There are plain Truths, and there are deep myſteries. The bounty of God hath left this Well of Living-water open for all; what runs over is for all commers; but every one hath not wherewith to draw. There is no Chriſtian that may not enjoy Gods Book, but every Chriſtian may not interpret it; thoſe ſhallow Fords that are in it, may be waded by every Paſſenger, but there are deeps, wherein he that cannot ſwim, may drown. *How can I without Guide*, ſaid that Ethopian Eunuch: Wherfore ſerves the tongue of the Learned, but to direct the Ignorant? Their modeſty is of no leſſe uſe than the others skill. It is

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a woefull condition of a Church when no man will be ignorant.

What ſervice can our eies do us in the waies of God without our thoughts? our diligent and frequent reading, therefore, muſt be attended with our holy meditation: we feed on what we read, but we digeſt only what we meditate of. *What* is in our Bible is Gods; but that which is in our hearts, is our own: By all which our care muſt be, not ſo much to become wiſer, as to become better, labouring ſtill to reduce all things to godly practice.

Finally, as we enter into this task with the lifting up of our hearts for a bleſſing, ſo we ſhut it up in the ejaculations

lations of our thanksgiving to that God, who hath blessed us with the free use of his Word.

Sect. 23.

OUr eie is our best guide to God our Creator, but our ear is it that leads us to God our Redeemer. *How shall they beleeve except they heare?* Which that we may effectually doe, our devotion suggests unto us some duties before the act, some in the act, some after the act.

It is the Apostles charge, that we should be swift to hear, but heed must be taken, that we make not more haste than good speed: we may not be so forward as not to *look to our foot* when we

Eccles. 5. 1.

we go to the house of God, lest if we be too ready to hear, we offer *the sacrifice of Fools.* What are the feet of the soul, but our affections? If these be not set right, we may easily stumble, and wrench at Gods threshold. Rash actions can never hope to prosper; as therefore to every great Work, so to this, there is a due preparation required; and this must be done by meditation first, then by praier. Our meditation first, sequesters the heart from the world, and shakes off those distractive thoughts, which may carry us away from these better things: for what room is there for God, where the World hath taken up the lodging?

Wee

We cannot serve God and Mammon. Then secondly, it seizes upon the heart for God, fixing our thoughts upon the great businesse we goe about; recalling the greatnesse of that Majesty, into whose presence we enter, and the main importance of the service we are undertaking; and examining our intentions wherewith we addresse our selves to the work intended; I am now going to Gods House; Wherefore do I go thither? Is it to see, or to be seen? Is it to satisfie my own curiosity in hearing what the Preacher will say? Is it to satisfie the law, that requires my presence; Is it to please others eies, or to avoid their censures? Is it

it for fashion? Is it for recreation? Or is it with a sincere desire to do my soul good, in gaining more knowledge, in quickning my affections? Is it in a desire to approve my selfe to my God, in the conscience of my humble obedience to his command, and my holy attendance upon his Ordinance? And where we find our ends amisse, chiding and rectifying our obliquities, where just and right, prosecuting them towards a further perfection.

Which that it may be done, our meditation must be seconded by our praiers. It is an unholy rudenesse to presse into the presence of that God whom we have not invoked: Our praier

must be, that God would yet more prepare us for the work, and sanctifie us to it, and blesse us in it; that he would remove our sinnes, that he would send down his Spirit into our hearts, which may inable us to this great service; that he would blesse the Preacher in the delivery of his sacred message, that he would be pleased to direct his Messengers tongue to the meeting with our necessities; that he would free our hearts from all prejudices and distractions, that he would keep off al temptations, which might hinder the good entertainment, and successe of his blessed Word: Finally, that he would make us truly teachable, and his ordinance the

the power of God to our salvation.

In the act of hearing, Devotion cals us to *Reverence, Attention, Application. Reverence* to that great God, who speaks to us, by the mouth of a weak man; for in what is spoken from Gods Chair, agreeable to the Scriptures, the sound is mans, the substance of the message is Gods; Even an *Eglon*, when he hears of a message from God, riseth out of his seat. It was not St *Pauls* condition only, but of all his faithfull servants, to whom he hath committed the word of reconciliation; *They are Ambassadors for Christ; as if God did beseech us by them, they pray us in Christs stead to be reconci-*

Judg. 3. 20.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

led to God: The Ambaſſie is not the bearers, but the Kings; and if we do not acknowledge the great King of heaven in the voice of the Goſpel, we cannot but incur a contempt.

When therefore we ſee Gods meſſenger in his pulpit, our eie looks at him, as if it ſaid with *Cornelius*, Acts 10.33. *we are all here preſent before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*; whence cannot but follow together with an awfull diſpoſition of mind, a reverent deportment of the body; which admits not a wild & roving eie, a drouzy head, a chatting tongue, a rude and indecent poſture; but compoſes it ſelfe to ſuch a ſite as may befits a pious ſoul in ſo religi-

religious an imploiment. Neither do we come as authorized Judges to sit upon the Preacher, but as humble Disciples to sit at his feet.

Sect. 24.

Reverence cannot but draw on Attention; We need not be bidden to hang on the lips of him whom we honour. It is the charge of the Spirit, *Let him that hath an ear, hear*; Every one hath not an ear, and of those that have an ear, every one heareth not; The soul hath an ear as well as the body; if both these ears doe not meet together in one act, there is no hearing: Common experience tels us that when the mind is other-

wise taken up, we do no more hear what a man says, than if we had been deaf, or he silent. Hence is that first request of *Abigail* to *David*;

1 Sam. 25. 24. *Let thine handmaid speak to thine ears, and hear the words of thine handmaid*; and *Job* so importunately urgeth his

Job 13. 17. friends, *Hear diligently my speech and my declaration with your ears*. The outward ear may be open, and the inward shut; if way be not made through both, we are deafe to spirituall things.

Psa. 40. 6. *Mine ear hast thou bored*, or *digged* saith the Psalmist; the vulgar reads it, *my ears hast thou perfected*: Surely our ears are grown up with flesh; there is no passage for a perfect hearing of the voice of God, till he have made

made it by a ſpirituall perforation.

And now that the ear is made capable of good counſel, it doth as gladly receive it; taking in every good leſſon, and longing for the next: Like unto the dry and chopped earth, which ſoaks in every ſilver drop, that fals from the clouds, and thirſteth for more; not ſuffering any of that precious liquor to fall beſide it.

Sect. 25.

NEither doth the devout man care to ſatisfie his curioſity, as hearing only that hee might hear; but reducts all things to a ſaving uſe, bringing all he

hears, home to his heart, by a self-reflecting application; like a practiser of the art of memory, referring every thing to its proper place; If it be matter of comfort, There is for my sick-bed, There is for my outward losses, There for my drooping under afflictions, There for the sense of my spiritual desertions; If matter of doctrine, There is for my settlement in such a truth, There for the conviction of such an error, There for my direction in such a practise; If matter of reproofe, he doth not point at his neighbour, but deeply chargeth himself; This meets with my dead-heartedness and security, This with my worldly-mindedness, This with my

my ſelf-love and flattery of mine owne eſtate, This with my uncharitable cenſoriouſneſſe, This with my fooliſh pride of heart, This with my hypocriſie, This with my neglect of Gods ſervices, and my duty; Thus in all the variety of the holy paſſages of the Sermon, the devout minde is taken up with digeſting what it hears; and working it ſelfe to a ſecret improvement of all the good counſel that is delivered, neither is ever more buſie, than when it ſits ſtill at the feet of Chriſt. I cannot therefore approve the practiſe (which yet I ſee commonly received) of thoſe who think it no ſmall argument of their Devotion, to ſpend their time of

hearing, in writing large notes from the mouth of the Preacher; which, however it may be an help for memory in the future, yet cannot (as I conceive) but be some prejudice to our present edification; neither can the brain get so much hereby, as the heart loseth. If it be said, that by this means, an opportunity is given for a full rumination of wholsome Doctrines afterwards: I yeeld it, but withall, I must say that our afterthoughts can never do the work so effectually, as when the lively voice founds in our ears, and beats upon our heart; but herein I submit my opinion to better judgements.

Sect.

Sect. 26.

THe food that is received into the soul by the ear, is afterwards chewed in the mouth thereof by memory, concocted in the stomack by meditation, and dispersed into the parts by conference and practise; True Devotion finds the greatest part of the work behind; It was a just answer that *John Gerson* reports, given by a Frenchman, who being ask by one of his neighbours if the Sermon were done; no saith he, it is said, but it is not done, neither will be, I fear, in hast. What are we the better if we hear and remember not? If we be such auditors as the

Serm. ad Eccles. cautelam.

the Jews were wont to call sieves, that retain no moisture that is poured into them? What the better if we remember, but think not seriously of what we hear; or if we practice not carefully what we think of? Not that which we hear is our own, but that which we carry away: although all memories are not alike, one receives more easily, another retains longer; It is not for every one to hope to attain to that ability, that he can go away with the whole fabrick of a Sermon, and readily recount it unto others; neither doth God require that of any man, which he hath not given him; Our desires and endeavours may not be wanting where

where our powers faile; It will bee enough for weak memories, if they can so lay up those wholsome counsels which they receive, as that they may fetch them forth when they have occasion to use them; & that what they want in the extent of memory, they supply in the care of their practise; Indeed that is it, wherein lies the life of all religious duties, and without which they are but idle formalities; that which the Philosopher said of all vertue, I must say of true godlinesse, that it consists in action; Our Saviour did not say, *Blessed are ye if you know these things*; But, *If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.* The end of our desire

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of the ſincere milk of the Goſpel, is, that we may *grow thereby* in the ſtature of all Grace, unto the *fulneſs of God*.

1 Pet. 2. 2. Eph. 3. 9.

Sect. 27.

THe higheſt of all Gods ſervices are his Sacraments; which therefore require the moſt eminent acts of our Devotion. The Sacrament of initiation, which in the firſt planting of a Church is adminiſtred only to thoſe of riper age and underſtanding, cals for all poſſible reverence, and religious addreſſes of the receivers; wherein the Primitive times were punctually obſervant, both for ſubſtance and ceremony; now, in

in a ſetled and perpetuated Church, in which the vertue of the Covenant deſcends from the parent to the child, there ſeems to be no uſe of our preparatory directions: Only, it is fit that our Devotion ſhould call our eies back, to what we have done in our infancy, and whereto we are ever obliged; that our full age may carefully endeavour to make our word good, and may put us in mind of our ſinfull failings. That other Sacrament of our ſpirituall nouriſhment, which our Saviour (as his farewell) left us for a bleſſed memoriall of his death and paſſion, can never be celebrated with enough Devotion. Farre be it from us to come to this feaſt

feast of our God, in our common garments; the soul must be trimmed up, if we would be meet guests for the Almighty. The great Master of the feast will neither abide us to come naked, nor ill clad: Away therfore, first with the old beastly rags of our wonted corruptions: Due examination comes in first, and throughly searches the soul, and finds out all the secret nastinesse, and defilements that it hides within it; and by the aid of true penitence, strips it of all those loathsome clouts, wherewith it was polluted; Sin may not bee cloathed upon with grace; *Joshuah's* filthy garments must be pluckt off, ere he can be capable of

Zach. 3.

pre-

precious robes: Here may be no place for our ſinfull luſts, for our covetous deſires, for our naturall infidelity, for our malicious purpoſes, for any of our unhallowed thoughts; The ſoul clearly deveſted of theſe and all other known corruptions, muſt in the next place inſtead thereof, be furniſhed with ſuch graces and holy prediſpoſitions, as may fit it for ſo heavenly a work. Amongſt the graces requiſite, Faith juſtly challengeth the firſt place, as that which is both moſt eminent, and moſt neceſſarily preſuppoſed to the profitable receit of this Sacrament; for whereas the main end of this bleſſed banquet is the ſtrengthening of our faith,

faith, how should that receive strength, which hath not being? to deliver these sacred viands to an unbeleever, is to put meat into the mouth of a dead man: Now therefore must the heart raise up it selfe to new acts of beleeving, and must lay faster hold on Christ, and bring him closer to the soul; more strongly applying to its self, the infinit merits of his most perfect obedience, & of his bitter death and passion; and erecting it self to a desire and expectation of a more vigorous and lively apprehension of its omnipotent Redeemer. Neither can this faith be either dead, or solitary; but is still really operative, and attended (as with other graces) so espe-

especially with a serious repentance; whose wonderfull power is, to undoe our former sins, and to mold the heart and life to a better obedience: A grace so necessary, that the want of it (as in extream corruption of the stomack) turnes the wholsome food of the soule into poison; An impenitent man therefore comming to Gods Board, is so far from benefiting himself, as that he eats his own judgement: Stand off from this holy table, all ye that have not made your peace with your God; or that harbor any knowne sinne in your bosome; not to eat is uncomfortable, but to eat in such a state is deadly; yet rest not in this plea, that ye cannot

not come becauſe yee are unreconciled; but (as yee love your ſoules) be reconciled that you may come.

Another Grace neceſſarily pre-required, is charity to our brethren, and readineſs to forgive; For this is a communion, as with Chriſt the head, ſo with all the members of his myſticall body: This is the true Love-feaſt of God our Saviour, wherein we profeſſe our ſelves inſeparably united both to him and his; If there be more hearts than one at Gods Table, he will not own them; Theſe holy elements give us an Emblem of our ſelves: This bread is made up of many grains, incorporated into one maſſe; and this wine is

is the confluent juice of many clusters; neither do we partake of severall loaves, or variety of liquors, but all eat of one bread, and drink of one cup. Here is then no place for rancour and malice; none for secret grudgings and heart-burnings; *Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* Mat. 5. 23.

Neither may we doe as those two emulous Commanders of *Greece* did, who resolved to leave their spight behind them at Mount *Athos*, and to take it up again in their returne; here

here must be an absolute, and free acquitting of all the back-reckonings of our unkindnesse, that we may receive the God of peace into a clear bosome.

Sect. 28.

BEsides these graces there are certain holy predispositions so necessary, that without them our soules can never hope to receive true comfort in this blessed Sacrament; whereof the first is an hungring and thirsting desire after these gracious means of our salvation: What good will our meat do us without an appetite? Surely without it, there is no expectation of either

either reliſh, or digeſtion; as therefore thoſe that are invited to ſome great feaſt, care firſt to feed their hunger, ere they feed their body; labouring by exerciſe to get a ſtomach, ere they employ it: ſo it concerns us to do here: and, as thoſe that are liſtleſſe, and weak ſtomached, are wont to whet their appetite with ſharp ſawces; ſo muſt we by the tart applications of the law, quicken our deſires of our Saviour here exhibited.

Could we but ſee our ſins, and our miſeries by ſin; Could we ſee God frowning, and hell gaping wide to ſwallow us; we ſhould not need to be bidden to long for our deliverer; and every pledge of his favour

favour would be precious to us.

Upon the apprehenſion of our need of a Saviour and ſo happy a ſupply ther-of preſented unto us, muſt needs follow a renewed act of true thankfulnes of heart to our good God, that hath both given us his dear Son to work our redemption, & his bleſſed Sacrament to ſeal up unto us our redemption thus wrought and purchaſed; And with ſouls thus thankfully elevated unto God, we approach with all reverence, to that heavenly Table, where God is both the Feaſt-maſter and the Feaſt. What intention of holy thoughts, what fervour of ſpirit, what depth of Devotion muſt we now find in our

our selves? Doubtlesse, out of heaven no object can be so worthy to take up our hearts. What a clear representation is here of the great work of our Redemption? How is my Saviour by all my sences here brought home to my soul? How is his passion lively acted before mine eies? For lo, my bodily eie doth not more truly see bread and wine, then the eie of my faith sees the body and blood of my dear Redeemer; Thus was his sacred body torn and broken; Thus was his precious blood poured out for me; My sins (wretched man that I am) helped thus to crucifie my Saviour; and for the discharge of my sins would he be thus crucified:

Neither did he only give himſelfe for me, upon the Croſſe, but lo, he both offers and gives himſelfe to me in this his bleſſed inſtitution; what had this general gift been without this application? Now my hand doth not more ſenſibly take, nor my mouth more really eat this bread, than my ſoul doth ſpiritually receive, and feed on the bread of life; O Saviour, thou art the living bread that came down from heaven; Thy fleſh is meat indeed, and thy blood is drink indeed: Oh that I may ſo eat of this bread, that I may live for ever. He that commeth to thee, ſhall never hunger; he that beleeveth in thee, ſhall never thirſt: Oh that I could now

ſo

so hunger, and so thirst for thee, that my soul could be for ever satisfied with thee; Thy people of old, were fed with Manna in the wilderness, yet they died; that food of Angels could not keep them from perishing; but oh, for the hidden Manna, which giveth life to the world, even thy blessed self, give me ever of this bread, and my soule shall not die but live: Oh the precious juice of the fruit of the Vine, wherewith thou refreshest my soul! Is this the blood of the grape? Is it not rather thy blood of the new Testament, that is poured out for me? Thou speakest, O Saviour, of new wine that thou wouldest drink with

thy Disciples, in thy Fathers Kingdome, can there be any more precious and pleasant than this, wherewith thou cheerest the beleeving soule? our palate is now dull and earthly, which shall then be exquisite and celestiall; but surely, no liquor can be of equall price or sovereignty with thy blood; Oh how unsavory are all earthly delicacies to this heavenly draught! O God, let not the sweet taste of this spirituall Nectar ever goe out of the mouth of my soul; Let the cōfortable warmth of this blessed Cordiall ever work upon my soul, even till, and in, the last moment of my dissolution. Dost thou bid me, O Saviour, do this

this in remembrance of thee? Oh, how can I forget thee? How can I enough celebrate thee for this thy unspeakable mercy? Can I see thee thus crucified before my eies, and for my sake thus crucified, and not remember thee? Can I find my sins accessary to this thy death, and thy death meritoriously expiating all these my grievous sins, and not remember thee? Can I hear thee freely offering thy selfe to me, and feel thee graciously conveighing thy self into my soul, and not remember thee? I doe remember thee O Saviour; but oh that I could yet more effectually remember thee; with all the passionate affections of

a soul sick of thy love; with all zealous desires to glorifie thee, with all fervent longings after thee, and thy salvation; I remember thee in thy sufferings, Oh doe thou remember me in thy glory.

Sect. 29.

HAving thus busied it self with holy thoughts in the time of the celebration, the devout soul breaks not off in an abrupt unmannerlinesse, without taking leave of the great master of this heavenly feast, but with a secret adoration, humbly blesseth God for so great a mercy, and heartily resolves and desires to walk worthy of the Lord Jesus, whom it hath

hath received, and to consecrate it selfe wholly to the service of him that hath so dearly bought it, and hath given it these pledges of its eternall union with him.

The Devout Soul hath thus supt in heaven, and returns home, yet the work is not thus done: after the elements are out of eie and use, there remains a digestion of this celestiall food, by holy meditation; and now it thinks, Oh what a blessing have I received to day! no lesse than my Lord Jesus, with all his merits; and in and with him, the assurance of the remission of all my sins, and everlasting salvation. How happy am I, if I be not wanting to God & my self? How unworthy

ſhall I be, if I do not ſtrive to anſwer this love of my God and Saviour, in all hearty affection, and in all holy obedience?

And now after this heavenly repaſt, how do I feel my ſelfe? what ſtrength, what advantage hath my faith gotten? how much am I nearer to heaven than before? how much faſter hold have I taken of my bleſſed Redeemer? how much more firm and ſenſible is my intereſt in him?

Neither are theſe thoughts and this examination the work of the next inſtant onely, but they are ſuch, as muſt dwel upon the heart; and muſt often ſollicite our memory, and excite our practiſe, that by this means we

we may frequently renew the efficacy of this blessed *Sacrament*, and our souls may batten more and more, with this spirituall nourishment, and may be fed up to eternall life.

Sect. 30.

THese are the generalities of our Devotion, which are of common use to all Christians; There are besides these certaine specialties of it, appliable to severall occasions, times, places, persons; For there are morning, and evening Devotions; Devotions proper to our board, to our closet, to our bed, to Gods day, to our

own; to health, to ſickneſſe, to ſeverall callings, to recreations; to the way, to the field, to the Church, to our homes; to the ſtudent, to the ſouldier, to the Magiſtrate, to the Miniſter, to the huſband, wife, child, ſervant; to our own perſons, to our families; The ſeveralties whereof, as they are ſcarce finite for number, ſo are moſt fit to be left to the judgement, and holy managing of every Chriſtian; neither is it to be imagined, that any ſoule which is taught of God, and hath any acquaintance with heaven, can be to ſeek in the particular application of common rules to his own neceſſity or expedience.

The reſult of all is,

A devout man is he that ever ſees the inviſible, and ever trembleth before that God he ſees; that walks ever, here on earth, with the God of heaven; and ſtill adores that Majeſty with whom he converſes; That confers hourly with the God of ſpirits in his own language; yet ſo, as no familiarity can abate of his aw, nor fear abate ought of his love. To whom the gates of heaven are ever open, that he may go in at pleaſure to the throne of grace, & none of the Angelical ſpirits can offer to challenge him of too much boldneſs: Whoſe eies are well acquainted with thoſe heavenly guardians, the preſence of whom he doth as truly acknowledge, as

as if they were his sensible Companions. He is well known of the King of glory, for a daily sutor in the Court of heaven, and none so welcome there, as he: He accounts all his time lost that fals beside his God; and can be no more weary of good thoughts, than of happinesse.

His bosome is no harbour for any known evill; and it is a question whether he more abhors sin, or hell; His care, is to entertein God in a clear and free heart, and therefore he thrusts the world out of doors, and humbly beseeches God to welcome himselfe to his owne: He is truly dejected, and vile in his own eies: Nothing but hell is lower than

than he; every of his slips are hainous, every trespasse is aggravated to rebellion; The glory and favours of God heighten his humiliation; He hath lookt down to the bottomlesse deep, and seen with horror what he deserved to feele everlastingly; His cries have been as strong, as his fears just; and he hath found mercy more ready to rescue him, than he could be importunate: His hand could not be so soon put forth, as his Saviours, for deliverance. The sense of this mercy hath raised him to an unspeakable joy, to a most fervent love of so dear a Redeemer; that love hath knit his heart to so meritorious a deliverer, and wrought a blessed

blessed union betwixt God and his soul. That union can no more be severed from an infinite delight, than that delight can be severed from an humble, & cheerfull acquiescence in his munificent God; And now, as in an heavenly freedome, he pours out his soul into the bosome of the Almighty, in all faithfull sutes for himself and others; so, he enjoies God in the blessings received, and returns all zealous praises to the giver.

He comes reverently to the Oracles of God, and brings not his eie, but his heart with him; not carelesly negligent in seeking to know the revealed will of his Maker, nor too busily inqui-

inquisitive into his deep counsels; not too remisse in the letter, nor too peremptory in the sense: gladly comprehending what hee may, and admiring what he cannot comprehend. Doth God call for his ear? He goes awfully into the holy presence and so hears, as if he should now hear his last: catching every word that drops from the Preachers lips, ere it fall to the ground, and laying it up carefully where he may be sure to fetch it. He sits not to censure, but to learn, yet speculation and knowledge is the least drift of his labour; Nothing is his own but what he practiseth. Is he invited to Gods feast? he hates to come in a foul and slovenly dress; but

but trims up his ſoul, ſo, as may be fit for an heavenly gueſt: Neither doth he leave his ſtomach at home cloied with the world, but brings a ſharp appetite with him; and ſo feeds as if he meant to live for ever. All earthly Delicates are unſavory to him, in reſpect of that celeſtiall Manna: Shortly, he ſo eats and drinks, as one that ſees himſelfe ſet at Table with God, and his Angels; and riſes and departs full of his Saviour; and in the ſtrength of that meal walks vigorouſly and cheerfully on towards his glory. Finally, as he well knows that he lives, and moves, and hath his being in God, ſo he refers his life, motions, and being wholly to God; ſo acting

ing all things, as if God did them by him, ſo uſing all things, as one that enjoies God in them; and in the mean time ſo walking on earth, that he doth in a ſort carry his heaven with him.

THE

LIFE

THE Free Priſoner: OR, THE COMFORT of Reſtraint.

Written ſome while ſince in the TOWER.

By *J. H. B. N.*

London, Printed by *William Hunt*, 1658.

The Free Prisoner:

OR,

The Comfort of Restraint.

Sect. 1.

SIR,

WHiles you pity my Affliction, take heed lest you aggravate it, and in your thoughts make it greater than it is in my own; It is true, I am under restraint; What is that to a man, that can be free in the Tower, and cannot but be a prisoner abroad? Such is my condition, and every Divine

vine Philosophers with me. Were my walks much straiter then they are, they cannot hold me in; It is a bold word to say, *I cannot, I will not be a prisoner:* It is my *soul* that is *I:* my flesh is my partner, (if not my servant) not my self: However my body may be immured, that agile spirit shal flie abroad, and visit both earth and heaven at pleasure. Who shall hinder it from mounting up (in an instant) to that supreme region of blisse, and from seeing that, by the eie of faith, which S. *Paul* saw in extasies; and when it hath viewed that blessed *Hierarchy* of heaven, to glance down through the innumerable, and unmeasurable globes of light (which move in

in the firmament, and below it) into this elementary world; and there to compass seas and lands, without shipwrack, in a trice, which a *Drake* or *Cavendish* cannot doe, but with danger, and in some years navigation; And if my thoughts list to stay themselves in the passage; with what variety can my soul be taken up of severall objects; Here, turning in to the dark vaults, and dungeons of penall restraint, to visit the disconsolate prisoners, and to fetch from their greater misery, a just mitigation of mine own; There, looking in to the houses of vain jollity, and pitying that which the sensuall fools call happiness; Here stepping in to the Courts

Courts of great Princes, and in them observing the fawning compliances of some, the trecherous underworking of others; hollow friendships, faithless ingagements, fair faces, smooth tongues, rich suits, viewing all save their hearts, & censuring nothing that it sees not; There calling in at the low cottages of the poor, and out of their empty cupbord furnishing it self with thankfulnesse; Here so overlooking the Courts of Justice, as not willing to see rigour or partiality; There listning what they say in those meetings wch would passe for sacred, aud wondring at what it hears. Thus can, and shal, and doth my nimble spirit bestirre it selfe

selfe in a restlesse flight, making onely the Empyreall heaven the bounds of its motion; not being more able to stand still, than the heavens themselves, whence it descended: Should the Iron enter into my soul, as it did into that good Patriarchs, yet it cannot fetter me: No more can my spirit be confined to one place, than my body can be diffused to many. Perhaps therefore you are mistaken in my condition; for what is it I beseech you that makes a prisoner? Is it an allotment to the same room without change, without remove? What is that still to a mind that is free?

And why is my body then more a prisoner than the

best mans soul; that, you know, is peremptorily assigned, for inhabitation to this house of clay till the day of dissolution: Why more then the stars of heaven, which have remained fixed in their first stations ever since they were first created? Why more than those great persons which keep up for state; or dames for beauty? Why more than those Anachorites whom we have seen willingly coopt up for merit? How much more scope have we then they? We breath fresh air, we see the same heavens with the freest travellers.

Sect.

Sect. 2.

BUt we have (you will say) bounds for our restraint which the free spirit hates; as never being pleased, but with a full liberty both of prospect and passage; Any barre, whether to the foot, or to the eie, is a death: Oh vain affectation of wild, and roving curiosity! If their desires cannot be bounded, yet their motions must; When they have the full sight of heaven above them they cannot climb up into it; they cannot possibly see that whole glorious contignation; and when the whole earth lies open before them, they can measure but some small peeces of it. How can

they be quiet till they have purchased *Tycho Brahe* his prospective trunk of thirty two foot long, wherby they may discover a better face of heaven; some lesser Planets moving round about the Sun, and the Moonets about Saturn & Jupiter, and the mountains, seas, and vallies in the Moon? How can they rest til having acquainted themselves with the constellations of our Hemisphere, they have passed the Equinoctiall, and seen the triangle, the crosse, and the clouds, and the rest of the unknown stars that move above the other Pole? And when all this is done, they are but who they were, no whit better, no whit wiser, and perhaps far lesse happy than those who never smelt

any but their own smoak; never knew any star, but Charls-wayn, the morning star, and the seven. For me, I do not envy, but wonder at the licentious freedome, which these men thinke themselves happy to enjoy; and hold it a weakneſſe in those minds, which cannot find more advantage and pleasure in confinement, & retiredneſſe. Is it a small benefit, that I am placed there, where no oaths, no blasphemies beat my eares? where my eies are in no perill of wounding objects; where I hear no invectives, no false doctrines, no fermocinations of Iron-mongers, Felt-makers, Coblers, Broom-men, Grooms, or any other of those inspired

ignorants; no curses, no ribaldries: where I see no drunken comessations, no rebellious routs, no violent oppressions, no obscene rejoicings, nor ought else that might either vex or affright my soul. This, this is my liberty: who whiles I sit here quietly lockt up by my keeper, can pity the turmoils & distempers abroad, and bless my own immunity from those too common evils.

Sect. 3.

IS it the necessity, and force of the restraint; since those things which we do voluntarily, are wont to passe from us with delight, which being imposed seem grievous to us? Why should not

I have so much power over my will as to make that voluntary in me, to undergoe, which another wills forceably to inflict? the mind that is truely subacted to Grace, can so frame it self to what it must suffer, as that it finds a kind of contentment in patience; Thus we daily doe to the Almighty, whose wil, by our humble submission, we make ours; and pray that we may do so: And who can restraine us without him? If therefore my wise and holy God think it best to cage me up, by the command of authority (upon what cause soever) why should not I think this inclosure a better liberty: who know there is perfect freedome in his obedience? So

then, if constraint make a prisoner, I am none; who am most willingly, where my God will have me: And, if my will did not often carry me out of my own walls at home, why cannot it as well confine me to a larger compasse of the Tower?

Sect. 4.

IS it solitude and Infrequence of visitation? This may perhaps be troublesom to a man that knows not to entertein himselfe; but, to him that can hold continual discourse with his owne heart, no favor can be greater; For of all other, these selfe-conferences are most beneficiall to the soul; Other mens communication may spend

spend the time with more advantage of learning, or mirth; but none can yield us so much spirituall profit, as our own soliloquies: And when all is done, the Greeks said well; It is not much, but usefull that makes truly wise. Besides this, we can never have the opportunity of so good company, as when we are alone: Now, we enjoy the society of God, and his Angels, which we cannot so freely doe in a throng of visitants: When God would expresse his greatest intireness with his Church, *Ducam eam in solitudinem*, saith he: *I will bring her into the wilderness, and there speak comfortably to her.* We cannot expect so sweet conversation with God, in

ὁ χρήσιμος, οὐχ ὁ πολὺς ἔιδωσι σοφός.

Hos. 2. 14.

the presence of others, as a-part. Oh the divine benefit of an holy solitarinesse, which no worldly heart can either know or value! What care I for seeing of men, when I may see him that is invisible? What care I for chatting with friends, when I may talk familiarly with the God of heaven? What care I for enterteining mortall guests, when I may with *Abraham* and his Nephew *Lot*, feast the Angels of God: and (which were too great a word, if God himself had not spoken it) be attended by them?

Sect. 5.

IS it the reproach & ignominy that commonly attends

tends the very name of an imprisonment? weak minds may be affected with every thing: but, with solid judgements, it is not the punishment, but the cause that makes either the Martyr, or the malefactor. St *Pauls* bonds were famous: and *Petrus ad vincula* is not without a note of yearly celebrity: and it were hard, if so many blessed Martyrs, and Confessors, who have lived, and died in Jailes, for the truths sake, should not have brought prisons (such as they may be) into some credit. Shortly, as notorious crimes may be at liberty, so even innocence may be under restraint; yet those crimes no whit the better, nor this innocence the worse. Be-

Besides (that which perhaps came not within your freer thoughts) every restraint is not for punishment; there is a restraint for safety, a *salva custodia*, as well as *arcta*, such is this of ours: This strong Tower serves not so much for our prison, as for our defence; what horror soever the name may carry in it: I bless God for these wals, out of which I know not where we could (for the time) have been safe from the rage of the mis-incensed multitude: Poor seduced souls, they were taught it was piety to be cruel; and were misperswaded to hate and condemn us for that, (which should have procured their reverence and honour) even that

that holy station which we hold in Gods Church; and to curse those of us, who had deserved nothing but their thanks and praiers: railing on our very profession in the streets; and rejoicing in our supposed ruine: Father, forgive them, for they knew not what they did: Here we were out of the danger of this mis-raised fury, and had leasure to pray for the quenching of those wild-fires of contention, and causeless malice, which (to our great grief) we saw wicked incendiaries dayly to cast amongst Gods dear, & wel-minded people Here we have well & happily approved with the blessed Apostle, that (whatever our restraint be) the Word of

of God is not bound; With what liberty, with what zeale, with what successe hath that bee preached by us to all commers? Let them say, whether the Tower had ever so many, such guests, or such benedictions; so as if the place have rendred us safe, we have endeavoured to make it happy; Wherein our performances have seemed to confute that which *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* long since observed, that the mind laden with heavy burdens of affliction, is not able to do that service, which it can do when it is free and at ease; Our troubles through Gods mercy made us more active, and our labours more effectuall.

Non enim potest mens attrita & moribus & importunitatibus gravata, tantum boni agere, quantum dilatata & oppressionibus soluta. Cornel. ep. 2. Rufo Coepiscopo.

Sect.

Sect. 6.

ADde unto these (if you please) the eminent dignity of the place, such as is able to give a kind of honor to captivity, the ancient seat of Kings, chosen by them, as for the safe residence of their Roiall Persons, so for their Treasury, their Wardrobe, their Magazine; all these precious things are under the same custody with our selves; sent hither, not as to prison, but a repository; and why should we think our selves in any other condition? How many worthy inhabitants make choice to fix their abode within these walls, as not knowing where to be happier?

pier? the place is the ſame to us, if our will may be the ſame with theirs; they dearly purchaſe that, which coſt us nothing but our fees; nothing makes the difference, but the meer conceit of Liberty, which, whiles I can give to my ſelfe, in my thoughts, why am I pitied as miſerable, while their happineſſe is applauded?

You ſee then, how free I am in that which you miſcall my priſon; ſee now, how little cauſe I have to affect this liberty, which you imagine mee to want; ſince I ſhall be, I can be no other than a Priſoner abroad: There is much difference of Priſons; One is ſtraight and cloſe locked, ſo farre from admitting viſitants, that it ſcarce

scarce allowes the Sunne to look in at those crosse-barred grates; another, is more large and spacious, yeelding both Walkes and accesse; Even after my discharge from these Walls, I shall be yet sure to be a Prisoner, both these waies; For, what is my body but my prison in the one? and what is the world, but my prison in the other kind?

Sect. 7.

TO begin with the former, never was there a more close prisoner than my soule is for the time to my body; Close in respect of the essence of that spirit, which since its first Mittimus, never stirr'd out from this strait room; never can doe,

doe, till my Gaole-delivery.

If you respect the improvement of the operations of that busie soul, it is any where, it is successively, every where; no place can hold it, none can limit it; but if you regard the immortal, and immateriall substance of it, it is fast lockt up within these walls of clay, till the day of my changing come; even as the closest Captive may write letters to his remotest friends, whilest his person is in durance; I have too much reason to acknowledge my native Jaile, and feel the true Symptoms of it to my pain; what darknesse of sorrow have I here found? what little-ease of melancholick lodgings? what manacles

and

and shackles of cramps? yea, what racks of torturing convulsions?

And if there be others, that find less misery in their prison, yet there is no good soul, but finds equall restraint: That spirituall substance, which is imprisoned within us, would faine be flying up to that heaven whence it descended; these walls of flesh forbid that evolation, (as *Socrates* call'd it of old) and will not let it out, till the God of spirits (who placed it there) shall unlock the doors and free the prisoner by death; He that infused life into *Lazarus*, that he might call him from the priso of the grave, must take life from us, when he cals us out of this prison

of

of flesh; *I desire to be loosed, and to be with Christ*, (saith the Apostle) as some versions expresse it; whiles we are chained to this flesh, we can have no passage to heaven, no free conversation with our Saviour; Although it was the singular priviledge of that great Doctor of the Gentiles, that he was in heaven before his dissolution: whether in the body, or out of the body, he knew not: How far that rapture extended, whether to both soule and body, if he knew not, how should we? But this we know, that such extasie and vision was in him, without separation of the soul from the body, which another should hope for in vaine: And for him, so he saw this glory

glory of Paradise, that he could not yet enjoy it: Before he, or we, can be blessed with the fruition of Christ, we must be loosed, that is, freed from our clog, & our chaine of this mortall body.

What but our prison wals can hinder us here, from a free prospect? What but these wals of flesh can hinder me from a clear vision of God? I must now, for the time, see as I may: Nothing can enter into my soule, but what passes through my senses, and partakes, in some sort, of their earthlinesse; when I am freed from them, I shal see as I am seen, in an abstracted & heavenly way; so as one spirit apprehends another: I doe now, at the best, see those spiri-

all

all objects darkly, by the eie of faith, as in a glasse; and that not one of the clearest neither (Alas, what dim representations are these, that I can attain to here, of that Majesty, whose sight shal make me blessed:) I shal once see as I am seen, face to face; the face of my glorified soul shal see the face of that all-glorious Deity, and in that sight be eternally happy; It is enough for a prisoner in this dungeon of clay, to know of, and fore expect, such felicity, whereof these earthly gyves render him as yet uncapable.

Sect. 8.

WOe is me! how many prisons do we passe

passe: so soon as ever this divine soul is infused into this flesh, it is a prisoner; neither can any more passe out of this skin, till this frame of nature be demolished: And now, as the soul of this Embryon is instantly a prisoner to the body, so the body is also a prisoner in the womb wherin it is formed: what darknesse, what closenesse, what uneasinesse, what nusance is there in this Dungeon of nature? There he must lie in an uncouth posture, for his appointed month, till the native bonds being loosed, and the doors forced open, he shall be by an helpfull obstetrication drawn forth into the larger prison of the world; there indeed he hath elbow-room enough:

enough: but all that wide scope cannot free him from a true incarceration: who knowes not that there are many differences, and latitudes of restraint? A *Simeon* may imprison and enchaine himself in the compasse of a pillar, not allowing himself the ease of his whole dimensions; *Peter* may be lockt up in a larger Jail, betwixt his two Leopards (as that Father tearms them;) St *Paul* may be two years allowed to be a Prisoner in his own hired house, but under the guard of his keeper, and not without his chain: There are those, who upon hainous, and dangerous occasions may be kept close under many locks; there are prisoners at large, who have the liber-

Acts ult.

ty

ty of the Tower; yet even these last notwithstanding the allowance of spacious walks, & fresh gardens, are no other than acknowledged prisoners. Such is my condition to the world, when I am at my fullest liberty. It is true, than when I look back to the straitness of my first, and native prison, and compare it with the large extent of that wide world, into which I am brought, I may wel with *Isaac's* Herdsmen say, *Rehoboth, For now, the Lord hath made me room*: but when I compare that world, wherein I am, with that whereto I aspire, and which I know to be above, and look to enjoy; I can see nothing here, but meer prison walls, and pro-

Gen. 26. 22.

fesse my life to be no other than a perpetuall durance.

Sect. 5.

Magna domus hominis.

IF *Varro* said of old, that the world was no other than the great house of little man, I shall be bold to add what kind of house it is; It is no other than his prison, yea, his dungeon.

Far be it from me to disparage the glorious worke of my omnipotent Creator: I were not worthy to look upon this large, and glittering roof of heaven, nor to see the pleasant varieties of these earthly landskips, If I did not adore that infinite power, and wisdome which appears in this goodly, and immense fabrick; and confesse

fesse the marvellous beauty of that majestick, and transcendent workmanship; Rather when I see the *Moon and the Stars, which thou hast ordained,* I say with the Psalmist, *Lord what is man?* Psal. 8. 3, 4.

But, O God, it is no dishonor to thee, that though this be a fair house, yet thou hast one so much better than it, as a Palace is beyond a Jail.

This beauty may please, but that ravisheth my soul: Here is light, but dim, and dusky, in respect of that inaccessable light, wherein thou dwellest: Here is a glorious Sun, that illuminateth this inferior world, but thou art the Sun who enlightenest that world above: Thou, to whom thy created Sun is but a shadow.

Here we converse with beasts, or at the best, with men; there with blessed souls, and heavenly Angels: Here some frivolous delights are intermixed with a thousand vexations; There in thy presence is the fulnes of joy: So then, let the sensuall heart mis-place his paradise here in the world, it shal not pas for other with me, than my prison: How can it? Why should it? for what other terms do I find here?

What blind light looks in here at these scant loopholes of my soul? Yea, what darknesse of ignorance rather possesses me? what bolts and shackles of heavy crosses do I bear about me? how am I fed here with the bread

bread of affliction? how am I watched & beset with evil spirits? how contumeliously traduced? how disdainfully lookt upon? how dragging the same chain with the worst malefactors? how disabled to all spiritual motions? how restrained from that full liberty of enjoying my home, and my God in it, which I daily expect in my dissolution? when therefore, I am released from these wals, I am still imprisoned in larger, and so shall be til the Lord of the Spirits of all flesh (who put me here) shall set me free; and all the days of my appointed time will I wait till this my changing come.

Sect. 10.

YOu see then by this time, how little reason I have to be too much troubled with this imprisonment, or my friends for me: But indeed, there are some sorts of Prisoners, which neither you nor I can have tears enow to bewaile: and those especially of two kinds.

The one, those that are too much affected with an outward bondage: The other, those that are no whit affected with a spirituall.

I the first rank are they that sink under the weight of their Irons: Poor impotent soules, that groaning under the cruelty of a Turkish thraldom, or a Spanish In-

Inquisition, want Faith to bear them out, against the impetuous violences of their tormentors. I sorrow for their sufferings, but for their fainting more. Could they see the Crown of Glory, which the righteous Judge holds ready for their victorious Patience, they could not but contemn pain, and all the pomp of Death, and confesse that their Light affliction (which is but for a moment) works for them a far more exceeding & eternall weight of glory. But alas, it is the weakness of their eies, that they only look at the things that are seen, close wals, heavy fetters, sharp scourges, mercilesse racks, and other dreadfull engins of torture, and

see not the things which are not seen, the glorious reward of their victory, blessednesse. Had they had *Stephens* eies they would have emulated his martyrdome; Surely whosoever shall but read the story of the mother and the seven brothers in the *Maccabees*, & that of the forty Armenian Martyrs frozen to death, reported by *Gaudentius*, and shall there see the fainting revolter dying uncomfortably in the Bath, whiles the other thirty and nine (together with their new coverted Keeper) are crowned by an Angel from heaven, cannot chuse (except he have nothing but ice in his bosome) but find in himselfe a disposition emulous of their courage, &

ambitious of their honour; But alas, what ever our desires, and purposes may be, it is not for every one to attaine to the glory of Martyrdome; this is the highest pitch, that earthly Saints are capable of: He must be more then a man, whom paine and death cannot remove from his holy resolutions, and especially, the lingring execution of both. It is well if an age can yield one, *Mole*: In what termes shall I commemorate thee, O thou blessed Confessor, the great example of invincible constancy, in these back-sliding times (if at least thy rare perseverance be not more for wonder than imitation) whom thirty years tedious durance in the Inqui-

quisitory at *Rome*, could not weary out of thy sincere profession of the Evangelicall truth? All this while thou wert not allowed the speech, the sight of any, but thy persecutors: Here was none to pity thee, none to exhort thee; If either force of perswasion, or proffers of favour, or threats of extremity, could have wrought thee for thy perversion, thou hadst not at last died ours. Blessed bee the God of all comfort, who having stood by thee, & made thee faithfull to the death, hath now given thee a Crown of life and immortality; and left thee a noble patterne of Christian Fortitude, so much more remarkable, as lesse frequently followed.

Whether

Whether I look into the former, or the present times, I finde the world full of shrinking professors.

Amongst the first Christians, persecution easily discovered four sorts of cowardly Renegadoes; The first, and worst, whom they justly stiled Idolater, that yielded to all the publicke forms of worship to those false Gods: The second, Sacrificers, who condescended so far, as to some kind of immolation unto those fained deities, or, at least, to a tasting of those things which were thus offered: The third, Incensers, such as (with *Marcellinus* himselfe) came on so far, as to cast some graines of incense into the Idols fire: The last were their

their Libellaticks, such as privately by themselves, or by some allowed proxey, denied the Faith; yet with their mony bought out this ignominy, and sinne of any publick Act of Idolatry.

Not to speak of those many thousands which fell downe before *Solyman* the second, and held up their finger to signifie their conversion to his Mahometism, for ease of their taxations; how many do we hear of daily of all nations, and some (which I shame and grieve to say) of our own, who yeeld to receive circumcision, and to renounce their Saviour? Oh the lamentable condition of those distressed Christians! If constant to their profession, they

they live in a perpetual purgatory of torment; If revolting, they run into the danger of an everlasting damnation in hel; Even this gentle restraint puts me into the meditation of their insupportable durance; Why do not all Christian hearts bleed with the sense of their deplorable estate? why is not our compassion heightned, according to the depth of their perill and misery?

What are our bowels made of, if they yearn not at their unexpressible calamity? Ye rich Merchants, under whose imploiment many of these poor soules have thus unhappily miscarried, how can you bless your selves in your bags, whiles you see the members

of

of Christ your Savior, thus torn from him, for want of a petty ransome? Ye eminent persons whom God hath advanced to power & greatness, how can you sleep quietly upon your pillows, whiles you think of the cold and hard lodgings, the hungry bellies, the naked and waled backs of miserable Christians? Lastly, what fervent praiers should we all, that professe the dear name of Christ, poure out unto the God of heaven for the strengthning of the faith and patience of these afflicted souls against the assaults of violence? and for their happy and speedy deliverance out of their woefull captivity?

Sect.

Sect. 11.

THese prisoners are worthy of our deep compassion; as those, who are too sensible of their owne misery; Others there are, who are so much more worthy of greater pity, by how much they are less apprehensive of their need of it; plausible prisoners under a spirituall tyranny; whose very wils are so captived to the powers of darkness, that to chuse they would be no other than bondmen; pleasing themselves in those chains, whose weight is enough to sink their souls into hell; such are they, who have yielded themselves over to be enthralled by any known

known sin; No men under heaven do so much applaud themselves in the conceit of their liberty; none so great slaves as they; If the very StoickPhilosophers had not enough evinced this truth, Divinity should: Indeed, the world is a worse kind of *Algier*, full of miserable captives; here lies one so fettered in lust, that he rots again there another, so laden with drunken excesse, that he can neither goe nor stand, & in very deed is not his own man: here, one so pinched with golden fetters, that he can neither eat nor sleep, nor at all enjoy himselfe; there, another so pined with envy, that he is forced to feed on his own heart: here, one so tormented with anger,

anger that he is stark mad for the time; and cares not how he mischieves himself in a furious desire to hurt others: there another so racked with ambition, that he is stretched beyond his own length, and lives in the pain of a perpetuall self-extension.

These, and all others of this kinde are most miserable prisoners, chained up for ever-lasting darkness: So much more worthy of our pity, as they are lesse capable of their own: Spend your compassion (if you please) upon these deplorable subjects; But for me, wish me (if you will) as free from any imputation of evill, as I was, and am from the thought of it; wish me in

in your free champian, where I may have no hedge so much as to confine my eie: wish me happy in the society of so dear and noble a Friend; but in the mean while think of me no otherwise, than as a Free Prisoner, And

Yours thankfully

devoted in all faithfull

observance,

J. N.

FINIS.

Severall Tractates

written by Dr. *Hall.* B. of *Norwich*, In and since his Imprisonment and Retiring. Namely,

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1820